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THE PRIZE CONDEMNATION

by

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In the Pennsylvania hill country, off the paved highway, along a little grassgrown country road were a few scattered houses, remnants of another day when the now unoccupied schoolhouse became the Church and Bible School on Sundays and the Community Center once a month.

Most of these families had intermarried and the characteristics of each bride were frankly discussed by the neighbors who, pretty generally, were relatives.

But one maiden, more adventurous than her associates, watched with interest the newcomer, a widower who had "hired out" at the most prosperous nearby farm.

As the weeks changed from winter to spring it was evident that a romance was growing in spite of the difference in the ages of these two.

Then the climax! An elopement! This kindled great excitement in the neighborhood and stories concerning the widower's former life flew from one gossip group of relatives to another. Finally this sad tale was told as the prize condemnation of the outsider who had entered their midst and carried away a bride one dark rainy night.

In the group around the woodburning heater in the sitting room of the bride's aunt, a voice, high pitched and filled with venom, announced, - "I can tell you something about him and it's the truth. I just found out, from